AMALGAM™ COMICS

THE EXCITING X-PATROL™

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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE TRIUMPH OF BROTHER BROOD!

DIRECT EDITION

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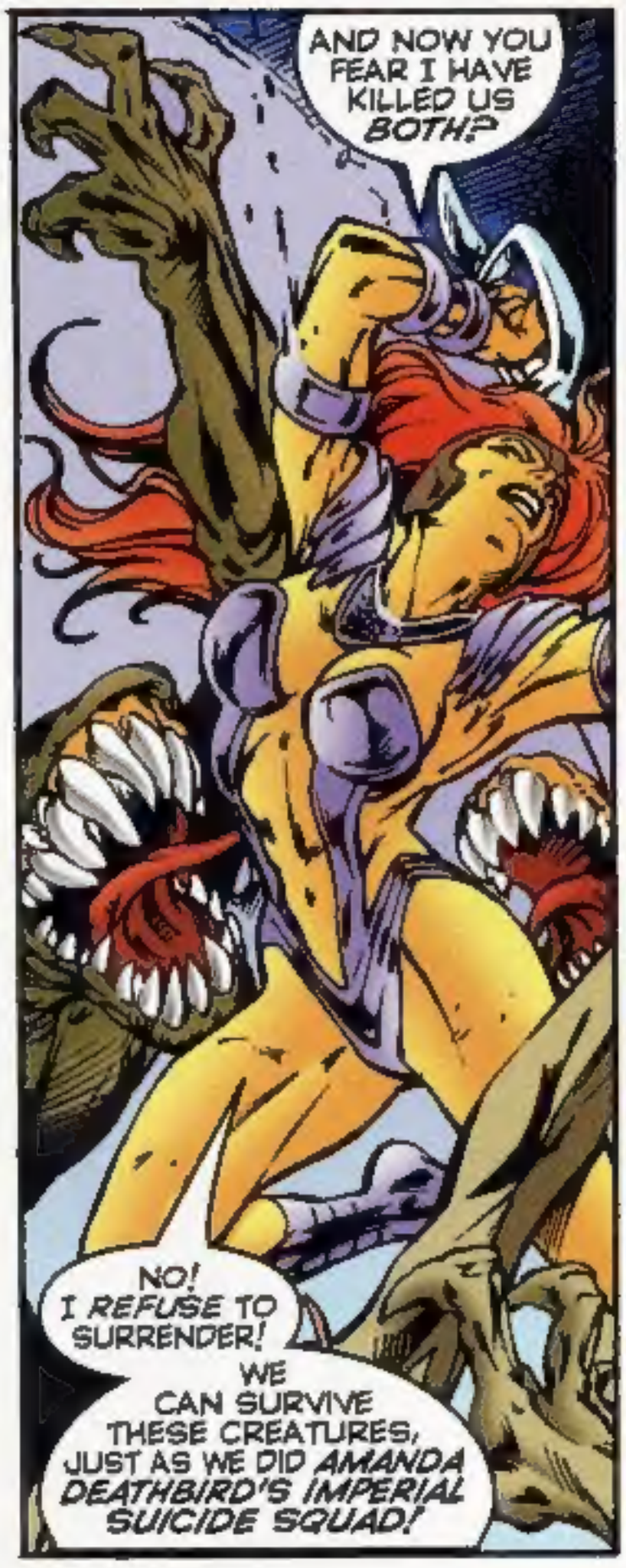
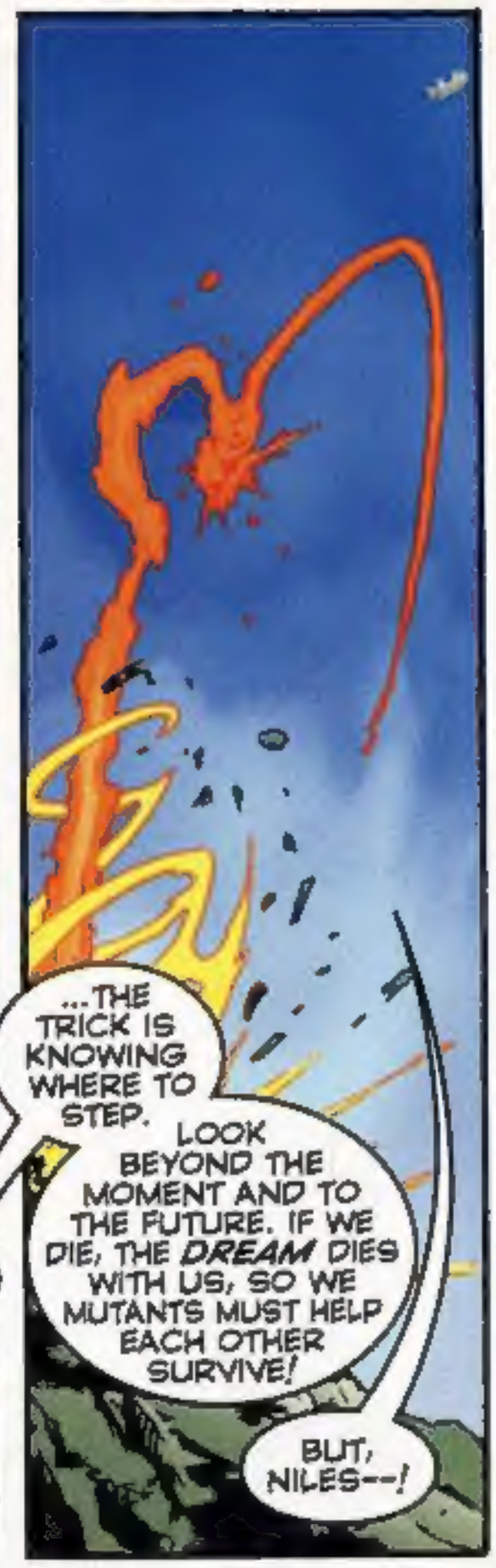
IF YOU HAD SEEN WHAT I SAW -- THAT POOR GIRL *TERRA-X* CAPTURED AND CHANGED INTO ROCKS AND DUST--!
SHE'S A *MUTANT!* THAT'S HER *POWER!*

THIS IS WHAT COMES OF FAILING TO STOP AND THINK BEFORE ACTING!
THE GIRL PROBABLY USED HER POWER TO JOIN WITH THE EARTH AND ESCAPE! YOU *RUSHED* IN HERE TO SAVE SOMEONE WHO WAS IN *NO* DANGER!


AND NOW YOU FEAR I HAVE KILLED US *BOTH?*
NO! I *REFUSE* TO SURRENDER!
WE CAN SURVIVE THESE CREATURES, JUST AS WE DID *AMANDA DEATHBIRD'S IMPERIAL SUICIDE SQUAD!*

LISTEN TO ME FOR ONCE, SHATTER-STARFIRE! THIS IS *NOT* A WINNABLE SITUATION!

BRAVERY AND FOOLISHNESS ARE ONLY A STEP REMOVED...


...THE TRICK IS KNOWING WHERE TO STEP.
LOOK BEYOND THE MOMENT AND TO THE FUTURE. IF WE DIE, THE *DREAM* DIES WITH US, SO WE MUTANTS MUST HELP EACH OTHER SURVIVE!
BUT, NILES--!

...HIS WILL.

WHAT GOOD FORTUNE. THE INFAMOUS NILES CABLE BROUGHT LOW. WELL DONE MY BROODLINGS.

ONCE HE IS UNDER OUR INFLUENCE, ZENOSHA WILL QUICKLY FALL... AS WILL THE WORLD!

IT IS THE WILL OF ALL -- THAT ALL BE ONE... BROOD.

PREPARE HIM FOR THE BROOD PIT!

ONCE HE WAS JUST THE CHARISMATIC LEADER OF THE PARASITIC CULT OF BLOOD, BUT THIS UNHOLY MAN FOUND TRUE POWER BY ALLOWING HIMSELF TO BE TAKEN BY THE ALIEN BROOD QUEEN. NOW HE IS...

BROTHER BROOD!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU LEFT HIM TO THE BROOD?
I HAD NO CHOICE -- HIS TELEKINETICS ARE STRONGER THAN MY FLIGHT!
AND I COULD NOT DISOBEY HIS ORDERS!
WHY NOT? YOU DID TO GO THERE!
IF YOU'VE KILLED HIM, KORY --
NOW, JANET...
NILES ISN'T DAID, IS HE?
NO, PAIGE.
THESE CREATURES HAVE FANGS AND CLAWS, BUT NO WEAPON TO STOP HIS WARRIOR'S HEART.
NILES NEEDS OUR AID, AND WE MUST MOVE SWIFTLY AND FORCEFULLY!
IT SEEMS INCOMPREHENSIBLE THAT NILES SHOULD SUFFER SUCH BEASTLY INCARCERATION...
...THE BIG GUY'S REALLY DOWN?
YOU SAY THESE BROOD LIVE IN CAVES BENEATH ZENOSHA? BUT THAT MUTANT-HATING STATE ALLOWS NO ENTRY TO FOREIGNERS. HOW WILL WE --
QUIET!
LET'S ALL CONTROL OUR-SELVES.
THERE'S NO QUESTION WE'LL GO AFTER NILES, BUT WE NEED A PLAN TO GET IN AND OUT SAFELY SO WE DON'T JUST SACRIFICE OURSELVES AS WELL!
I LIKE A GOOD GAME OF CHANCE, BUT I NEVER WASTE A CHANCE TO MAKE THINGS GO MY WAY!

AND I SUPPOSE, JANET, THIS PLAN OF YOURS DEPENDS ON HAVING YOUR NEW BOYTOY AS OUR PARTNER IN ADVENTURE?
WE HAVE A PAUCITY OF VERIFIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS "JERICHO."
CAN WE TRUST HIM?
NO OFFENSE, MA'AM, BUT BEASTLING'S SINGING GOSPEL HERE.
BUT I --

I'M PREPARED TO RISK MY LIFE WITH YOURS... YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS... PLEASE BELIEVE ME...

WHILE I MYSELF AM NOT READY TO ACCEPT ANY MAN ON THE STRENGTH OF HIS OWN WORDS...
...I AM ALSO NOT READY TO ASSUME TREACHERY FROM A COMRADE UNLESS IT IS PROVED BY HIS ACTIONS.

TRUST ME. JERICHO IS ON OUR SIDE.
Oh, WE'VE HEARD THAT BEFORE!
REMEMBER HAWK & DAGGER? WE TRUST HIM, HE KILLS HER, THEN GOES PSYCHO-MON..?
LIKE WE NEED TO GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN!

I AM NO TRAITOR, BEASTLING!
I WOULD NEVER BETRAY THE X-PATROL!
EXCUSE ME!
ARE WE A TEAM OR NOT?
A TEAM WHOSE LEADER SORELY NEEDS RESCUIN'?
SHE'S RIGHT. THIS DISCUSSION CAN WAIT.
TO THE X-JET --

X-PATROL
JUST A YEAR AGO, NILES BROUGHT TOGETHER A BAND OF UNTRIED STRANGERS, BONDED ONLY BY THEIR SHARED MUTANT HERITAGE, A GENETIC DIFFERENCE THAT MAKES THEM MORE THAN JUST HUMAN. NOW THEY ARE ON THEIR WAY TO BECOMING HEROES OF LEGEND -- OR HISTORY, FROM NILES' FUTURE PERSPECTIVE! THEY ARE:
JANET VAN DYNE,
ELASTI-GIRL!
LIFE-LOVING RICH GIRL WHOSE FAVORITE MUTANT ADVENTURE INTRODUCED HER TO NILES CABLE! WILL SHE LOSE HIM NOW?
NAME UNKNOWN,
JERICHO!
THE MYSTERY MAN WHO SHOWED UP ONE DAY ON THE ARM OF JANET VAN DYNE. DOES HE HOPE TO TAKE NILES' PLACE IN THE X-PATROL... AND HER HEART?
PIOTYR RASPUTIN,
FERRO-MAN!
HIS IRON MASK HIDES A FACE NOT EVEN A MOTHER COULD LOVE. IF NILES IS GONE, HOW WILL HE FIND HIS MISSING TWIN?
HANK LOGAN,
BEASTLING!
EMERALD-HUED SHAPECHANGER, SCIENTIST, AND MAVEN OF POP CULTURE. IF NILES IS LOST, WILL THE X-PATROL DISBAND, SENDING THE MERRY MUTANT BACK TO THE COLD HALLS OF ACADEMIA?
PAIGE GUTHRIE,
DIAL H.U.S.K.!
WITH THE SPIN OF HER AMAZING H-DIAL, PAIGE CHANGES SHAPE AND POWERS AS EASILY AS SHEDDING HER SKIN. WITHOUT NILES' GUIDANCE, WILL SHE BE ABLE TO DISCERN WHO THE REAL PAIGE IS?
PRINCESS KORIAND'RU,
SHATTERSTARFIRE!
HER ENERGY BLASTS AND SWORD MAKE HER A FEARSOME FIGHTER. CAN ALL HER WAR-SHARPENED SKILL RETURN HER TO TAMO-JORAN IF NILES IS LOST?

ZENOSHA, I SING OF THEE, WARPED LAND OF MISERY, SOON MAY YOU FALL...
PLEASE, HANK!
SO HERE'S THE STRATEGY: GO IN, GET NILES, GET OUT.

WHY, HOW PROFOUND.
JUST THE STRATEGY I'D USE AGAINST A MURDEROUS PSYCHOTIC DESPOT.
AND NO MESSY DETAILS TO KEEP TRACK OF.
WELL, WE DON'T REALLY KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS PLACE, DO WE?
WE KNOW WE MUST NOT BECOME CAPTIVES OF THE BROOD.

AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF THE BROOD, JERICHO?
WE DIN'T EVEN THINK THEY EXISTED, OURSELVES.
WHERE'D Y'ALL GET SUCH INFO?
THROUGH BITTER EXPERIENCE, PAIGE.
THROUGH STRYFE AND DESPAYRE...
WHAT MATTERS MOST IS THAT WE STAY BROOD-FREE...

WHEN... IF BROOD CONTROLS MUTANTS, ALL THE WORLD... WILL SUFFER.
I'VE SEEN... GUESSED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.

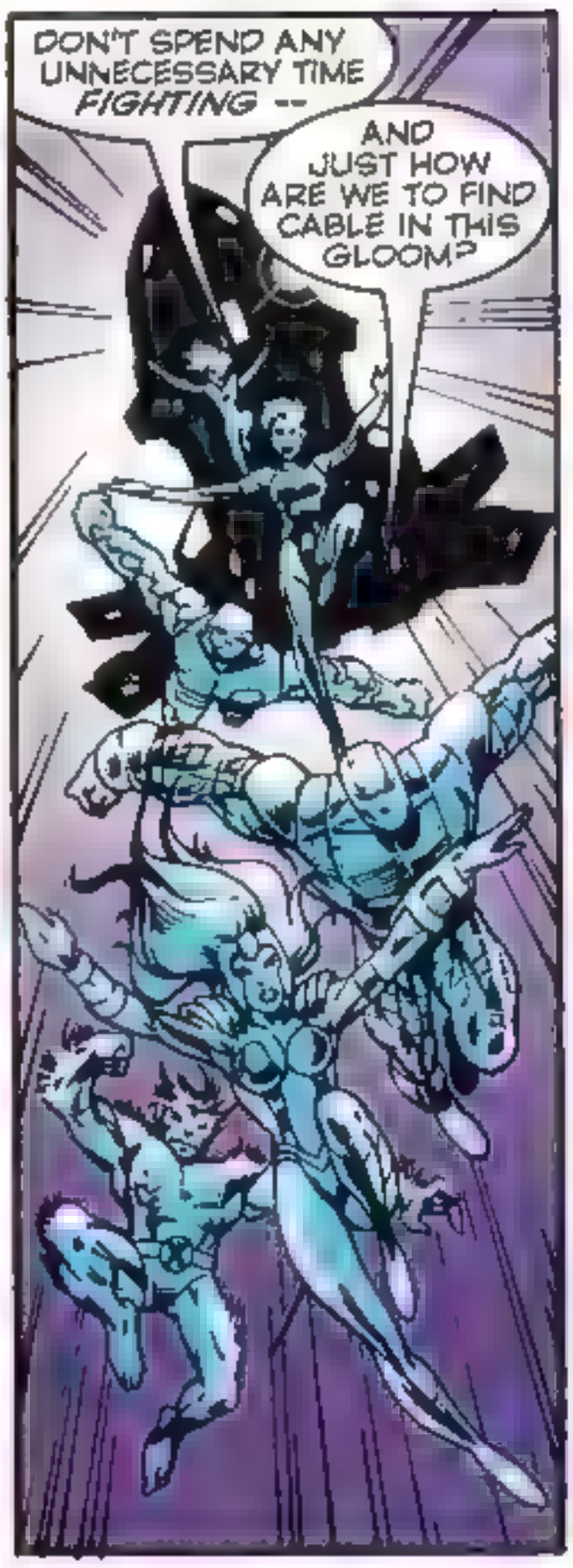
POOR JERICHO... ALL THIS DISTRUST MUST BE HARD ON HIM.
FUNNY HOW HE JUST DROPPED INTO MY WORLD OUT OF NOWHERE...
...YET I'D TRUST HIM WITH MY LIFE...

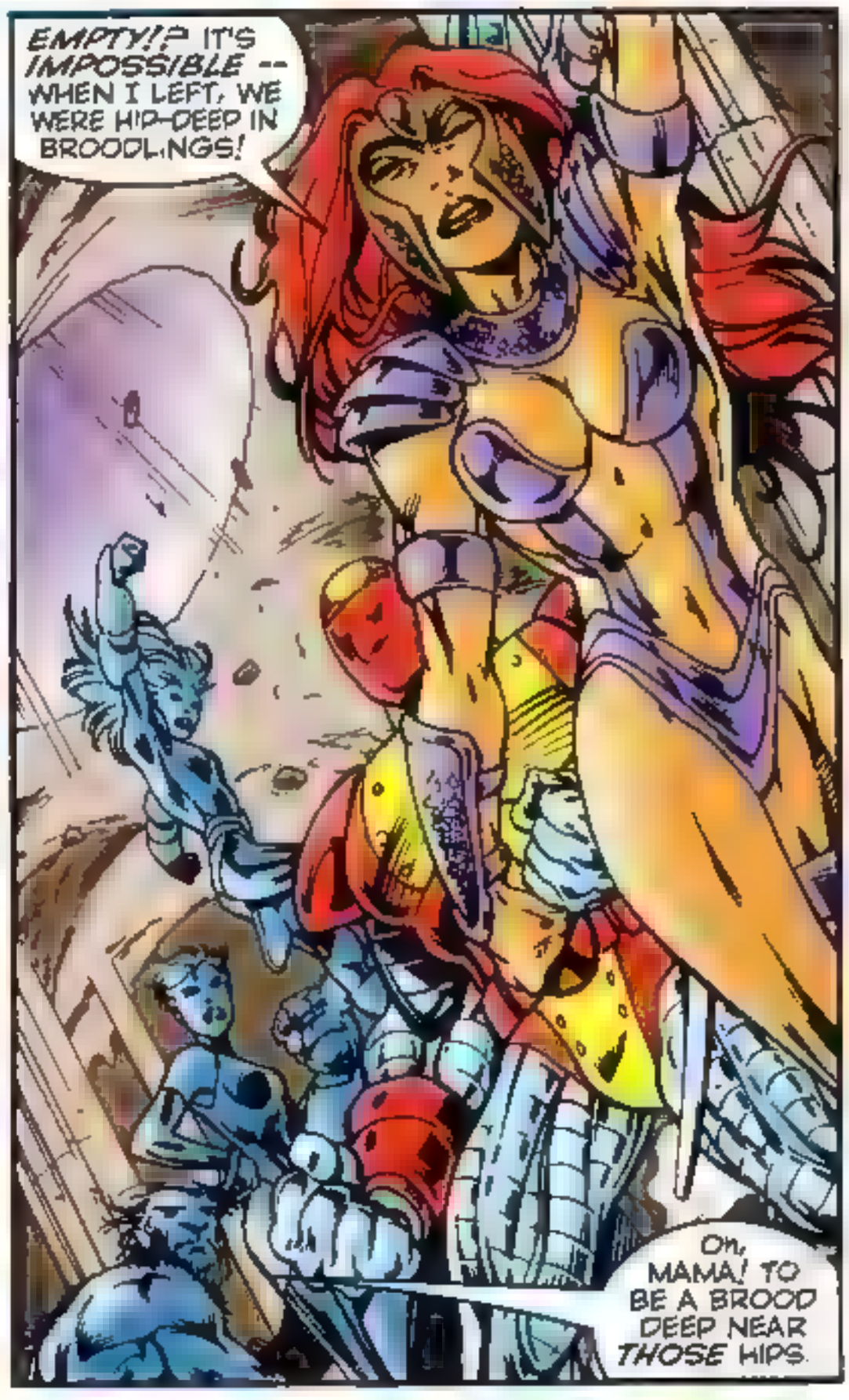
"...MUCH LIKE NILES. NILES. WE'VE SURVIVED SO MUCH TOGETHER... I PRAY HE'S STILL ALIVE."
GROAN
I'VE FAILED THEM ALL.
YOU'VE FAILED NO ONE, NILES.
I MUST BE DYING, HE THINKS, AS A GHOST FROM HIS DIMLY-REMEMBERED PAST TAKES SHAPE.
FAMILIAR AND BELOVED HANDS REACH OUT TO HIM. AT THEIR COOLING TOUCH, HIS FEVER LESSENS, THOUGH HIS HEART RACES AT SEEING HER AGAIN...
...RAVENIYA THE HEALER!
WOULD THAT I COULD HEAL ALL YOUR WOUNDS FROM WHERE I AM, BUT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.
DO LET MY TOUCH REMIND YOU OF WHAT YOU CARRY WITHIN YOU, NILES. REMEMBER...
SUDDENLY HE IS THERE AGAIN, THE FUTURE, IN THAT PLACE WHERE THE ASHKANI KEEP ALIVE THE ESSENCE OF LOST HEROES, THOSE CUT DOWN BEFORE THEIR TIME, THOSE WHO WOULD TRAIN AND TEACH HIM:
...BLACK ORCHID THE UNKNOWN...
...THE MICROSTAR MICRONAUTS...
...THE VIGILANTE KID...
...PREZ: MASTER OF KUNG FU...
...THE SEA DEVIL DINOSAURS...
...AND COUNTLESS OTHER QUIRKS OF CREATION WHO HELPED SHAPE THE WORLD HE KNEW.

AS SHE SPEAKS, MEMORIES CANCELLED BY TIME BECOME REAL TO HIM ONCE MORE...
...DEADDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT LIFE...
...THE SILVER TORNADO, VOID ELEMENTAL...
...THE ATOMIC BLACK KNIGHT, SWORDSMAN OF FUTURE AND PAST...
...BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, HER.
RAVENIYA THE HEALER, HIS LOST LOVE...
...AS SHE WAS BEFORE SHE BECAME TRIJENSKOT THE WARRIOR, AND DIED IN HIS ARMS.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW? CAN THE X-PATROL STOP BROTHER BROOD, OR IS THE DARK FUTURE WE KNEW A CERTAINTY?
I'M NOT HERE TO TAKE YOU, NILES, JUST TO REMIND YOU THAT YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CURE YOURSELF OF THE BROOD IMPLANT --
-- YOU GUARD INSIDE YOU A LITTLE PIECE OF MY SOUL-SELF.
I'VE THOUGHT OF THAT, BUT IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE. IF I RELEASE THE FRAGMENT TO HEAL MYSELF, I ALSO LOSE MY GRIP ON THE TECHNO-VIRUS INFECTING ME.
BROOD IMPLANT OR LETHAL NANOTECH -- I DIE EITHER WAY.

IT'S A QUESTION OF WHICH DOOM HURTS MY PATROL THE LEAST...
A PAINFUL DECISION, AND ONE YOU ALONE MUST MAKE.
CHOOSE WELL, MY LOVE...





TRY TO REIN YOURSELF IN, BEASTLING

WE'LL SPLIT INTO TWO TEAMS TO SEARCH --

JUST A MOMENT, JANET -- THIS IS A *PERPLEXING* SUBTERRANEAN PHENOMENON --

-- WHY SO MANY STALACTITES WITHOUT CORRESPONDING STALAGMITES ON THE CAVE FLOOR? THE CONDENSATION FROM ONE DRIPS TO *CREATE* THE OTHER...

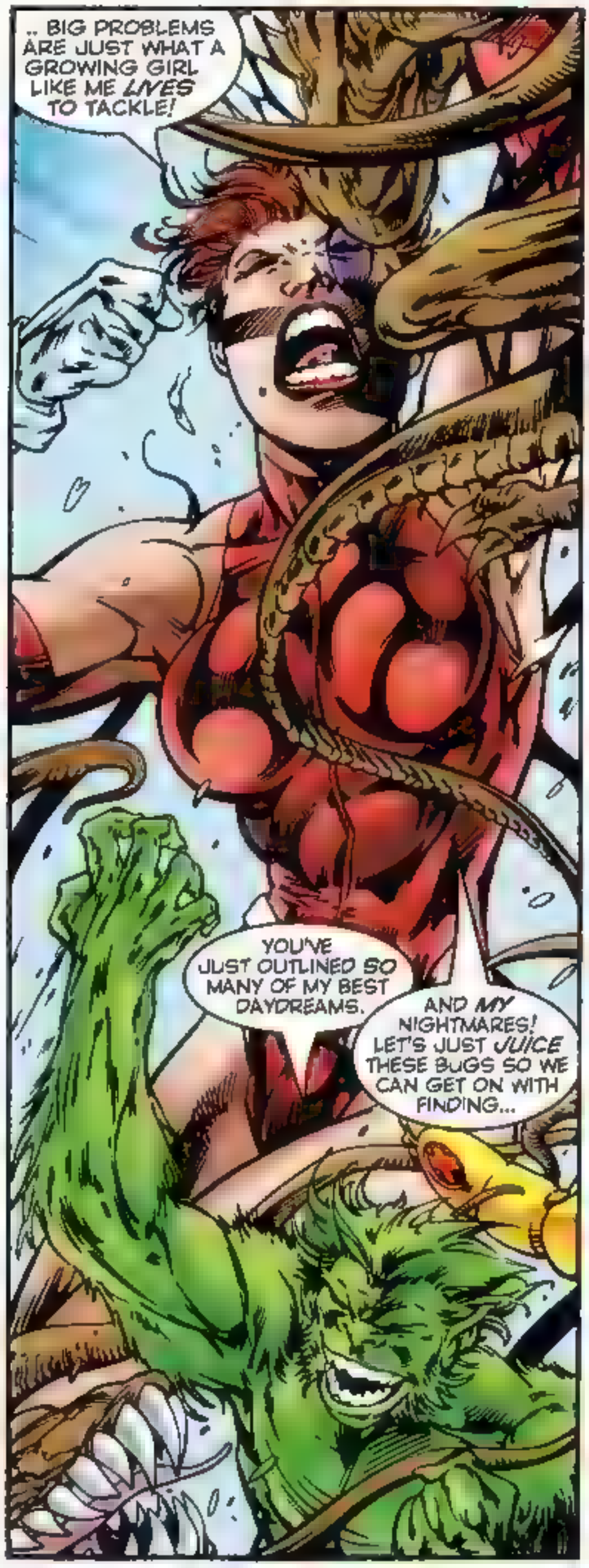
.. IN OTHER WORDS: LOTSA *POINTS* UP TOP, SO WHY'S THE FLOOR CLEAN?

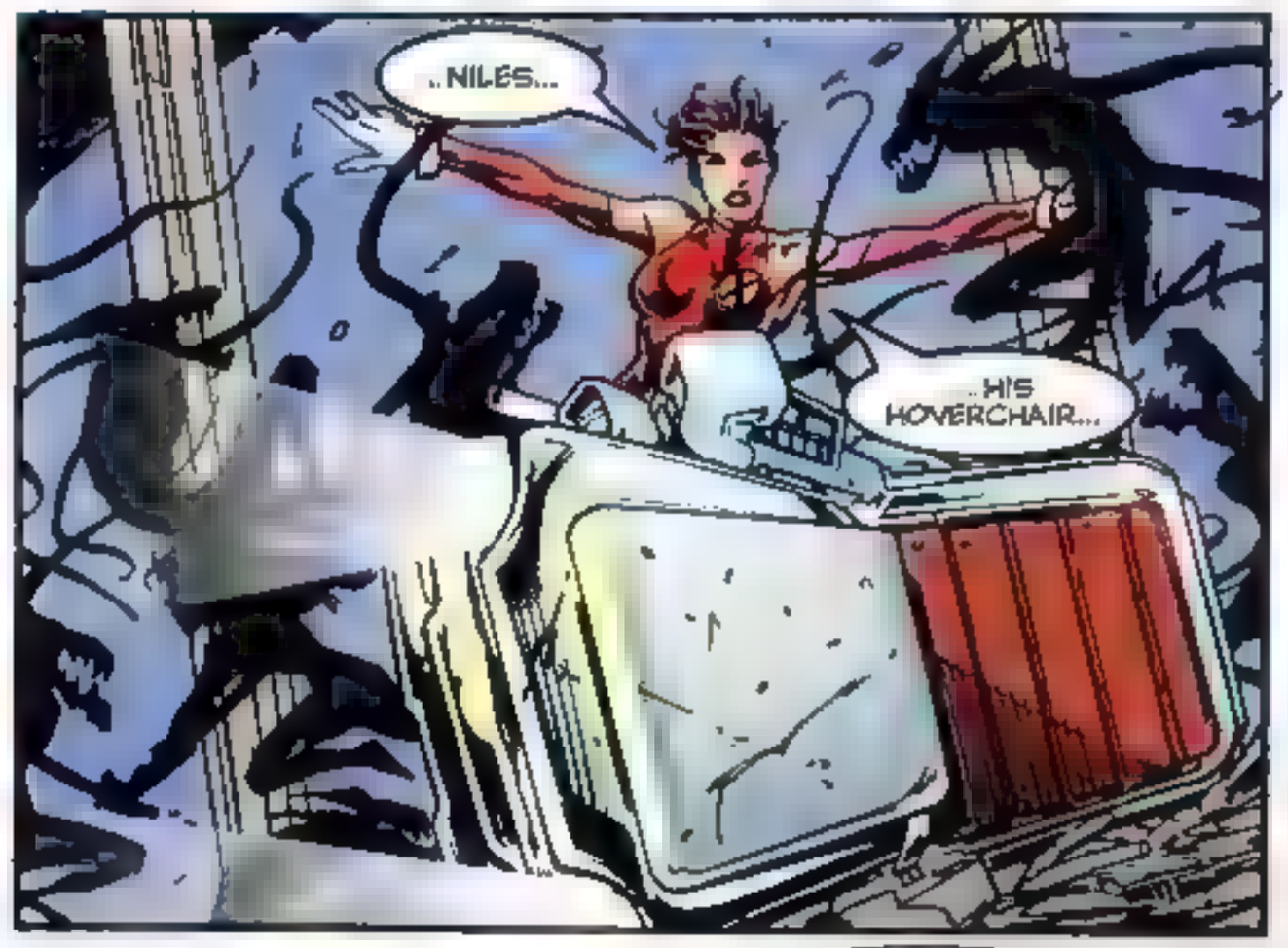
UNLESS THEY *AREN'T* STALACTITES!

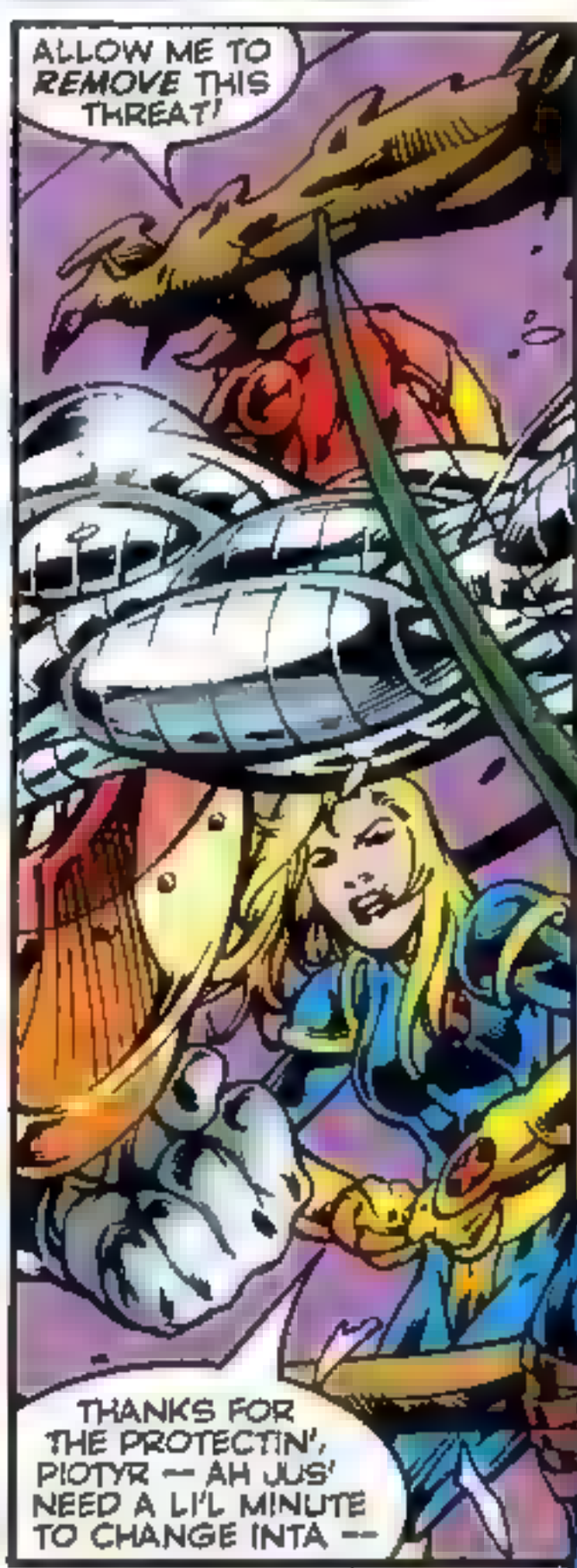
BROOD!

THEY WILL TASTE MY BLADE!

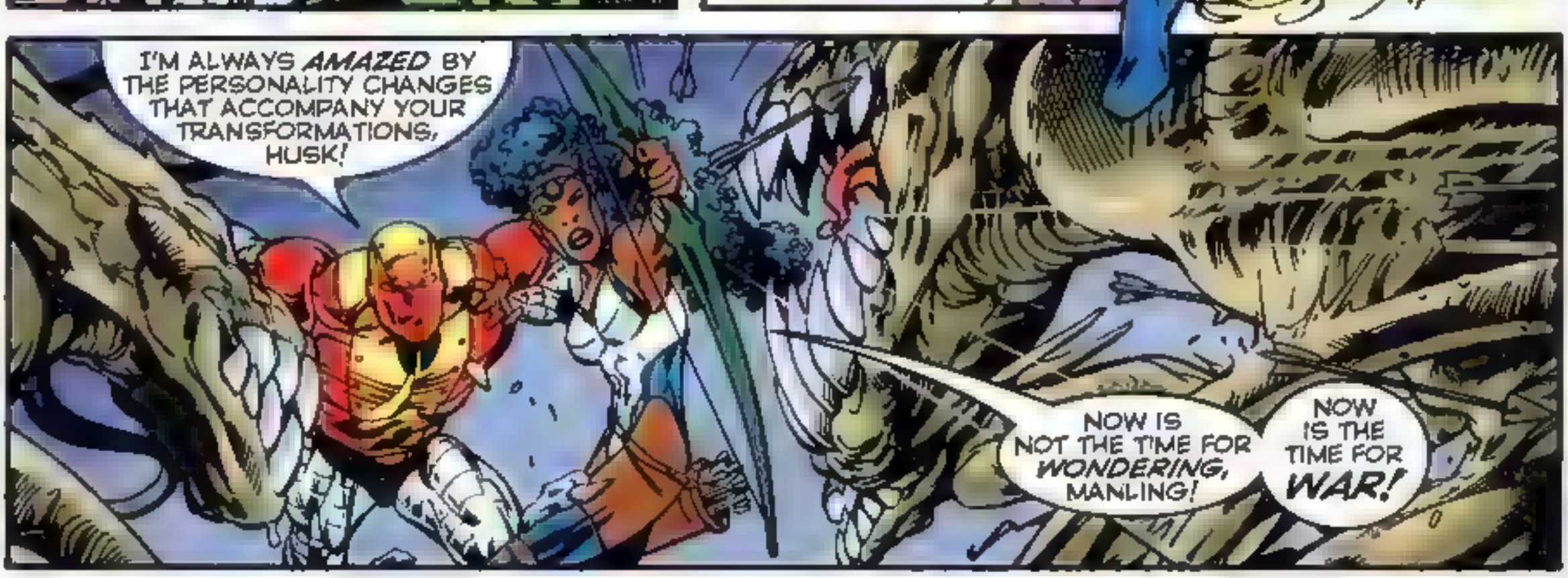
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT A *BIG* PROBLEM...

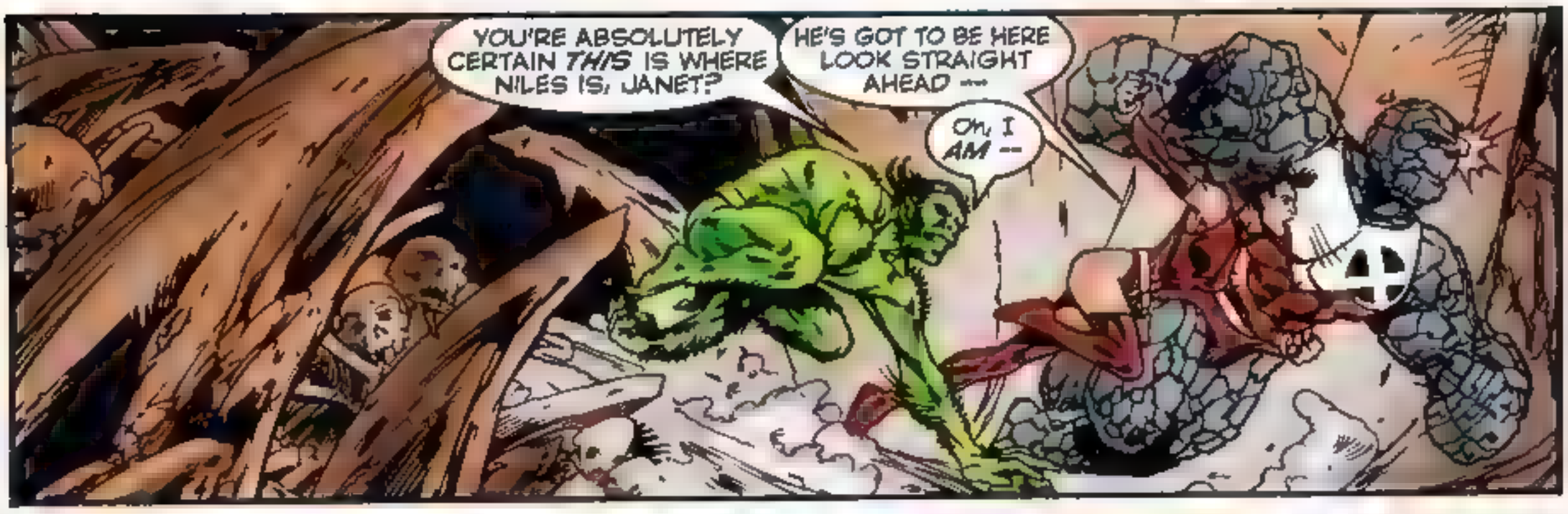

.. BIG PROBLEMS ARE JUST WHAT A GROWING GIRL LIKE ME *LIVES* TO TACKLE!
YOU'VE JUST OUTLINED SO MANY OF MY BEST DAYDREAMS.
AND *MY* NIGHTMARES! LET'S JUST *JUICE* THESE BUGS SO WE CAN GET ON WITH FINDING...

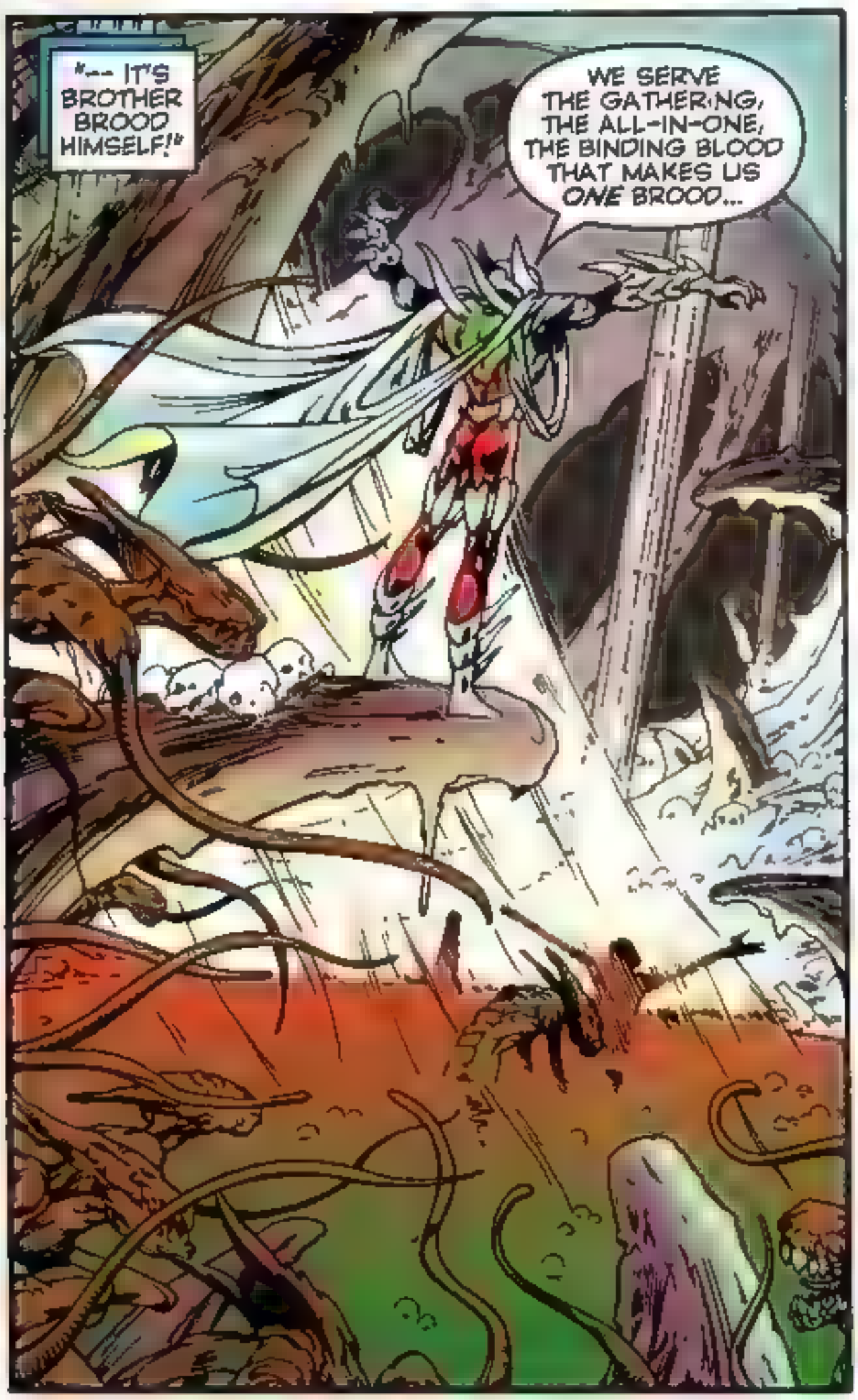

..NILES...
..HIS HOVERCHAIR...


ALLOW ME TO *REMOVE* THIS THREAT!
THANKS FOR THE PROTECTIN', PIOTYR -- AH JUS' NEED A LI'L MINUTE TO CHANGE INTA --

-- *ARTEMISTY KNIGHT! THE BIONIC AMAZON ARCHER!*
MY CYBER-DEMONIC ACCURACY WILL MAKE SHORT WORK OF THESE VERMIN!

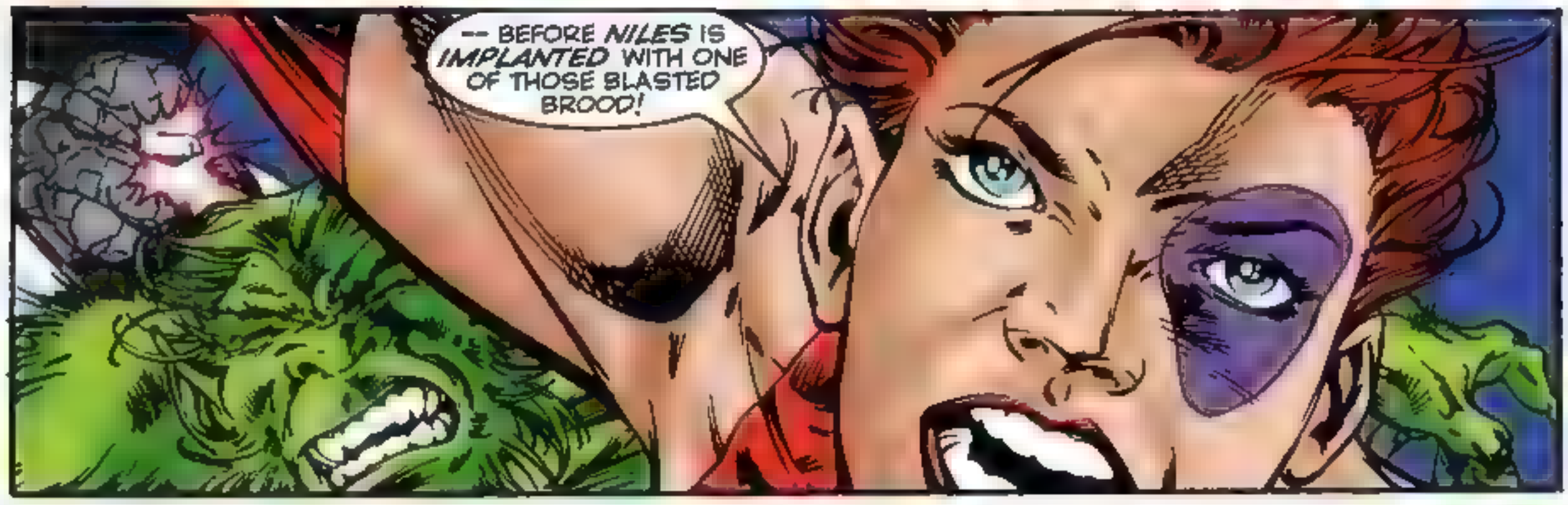

I'M ALWAYS *AMAZED* BY THE PERSONALITY CHANGES THAT ACCOMPANY YOUR TRANSFORMATIONS, HUSK!
NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR *WONDERING*, MANLING!
NOW IS THE TIME FOR *WAR!*


YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN *THIS* IS WHERE NILES IS, JANET?
HE'S GOT TO BE HERE LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD ---
Oh, I AM --


"-- IT'S BROTHER BROOD HIMSELF!"
WE SERVE THE GATHERING, THE ALL-IN-ONE, THE BINDING BLOOD THAT MAKES US *ONE* BROOD...

"AND THAT DIABOLICAL FIEND MUST SURELY BE GLOATING OVER HAVING CAPTURED A *MUTANT!*"
...NOW THE BROODPIT QUIVERS, READY TO BIRTH ONE WHO CARRIES NEW LIFE WITHIN --

-- NEW BLOOD FOR THE BROOD!
WE'VE GOT TO STOP THIS *CEREMONY* --


-- BEFORE *NILES* IS *IMPLANTED* WITH ONE OF THOSE BLASTED BROOD!

ARISE, TERRA-X THE DESTROYER!
ARISE AND ATTACK THE INFIDELS WHO WOULD DESECRATE YOUR HOLY REBIRTH!
I LIVE TO SERVE, BROTHER BROOD...
IT'S NOT NILES! BUT I FELT --
Uh... HEY, TERRA.
WE'RE STILL BUDS, RIGHT?
NOT WHILE YOU REMAIN EMPTY!
IT'S THAT GIRL I SAW CAPTURED!
TERRA-X? SHE'S A TRAITOR!
SHE'S THE ONE WHO DELIVERED US INTO THE HANDS OF X-STROKE, THE ELIMINATOR!
HE NEARLY WIPED US OUT!
AND NOW I WILL DELIVER YOU INTO THE HANDS OF THE BROOD, FERRO MAN!
HOW'S THAT FOR DÉJA VU?

THE SEQUEL IS AS *PAINFUL* AS THE ORIGINAL.
IZZAT A *JOKE*, RUSTY?
BETTER LEAVE HUMOR TO THE PROFESSIONALS.
SPEAKING OF, LOOKS LIKE YOU LOSERS...
...FOUND SOME *NEW* BLOOD.
YOU MY *REPLACEMENT*, UGLY?

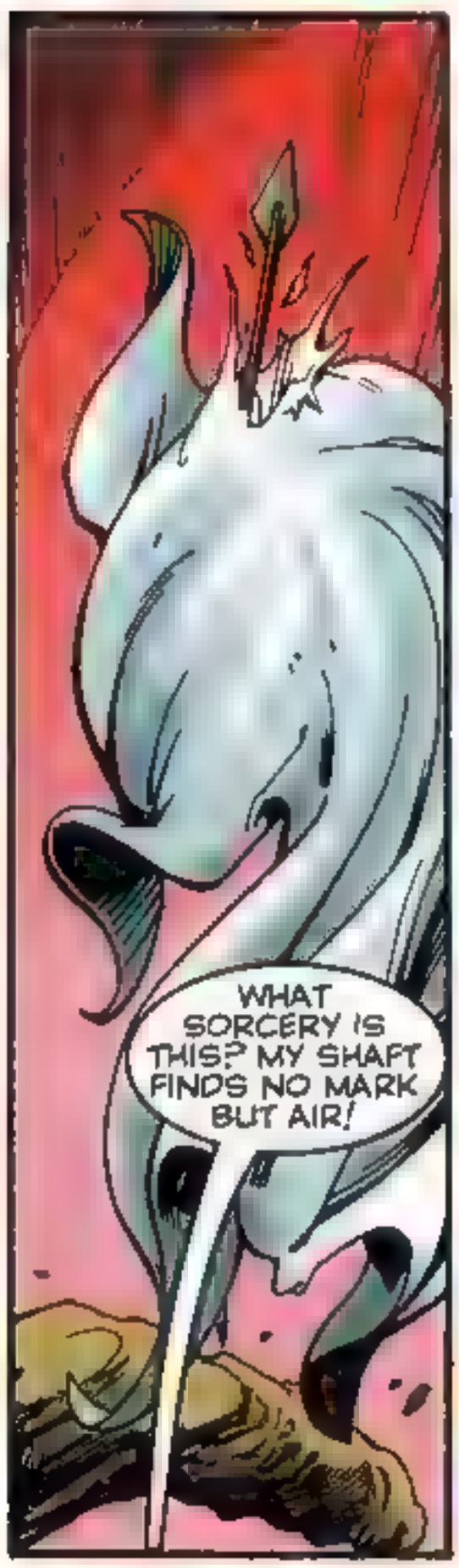
YOU *CAN* FIGHT OFF THE BROOD'S INFLUENCE, TERRA-X!
FOR THE SAKE OF ALL MUTANTKIND, *FIGHT!*
TOO LATE FOR *ME*, BUD --
-- THIS BAD GIRL'S GONE *WAY* BAD!

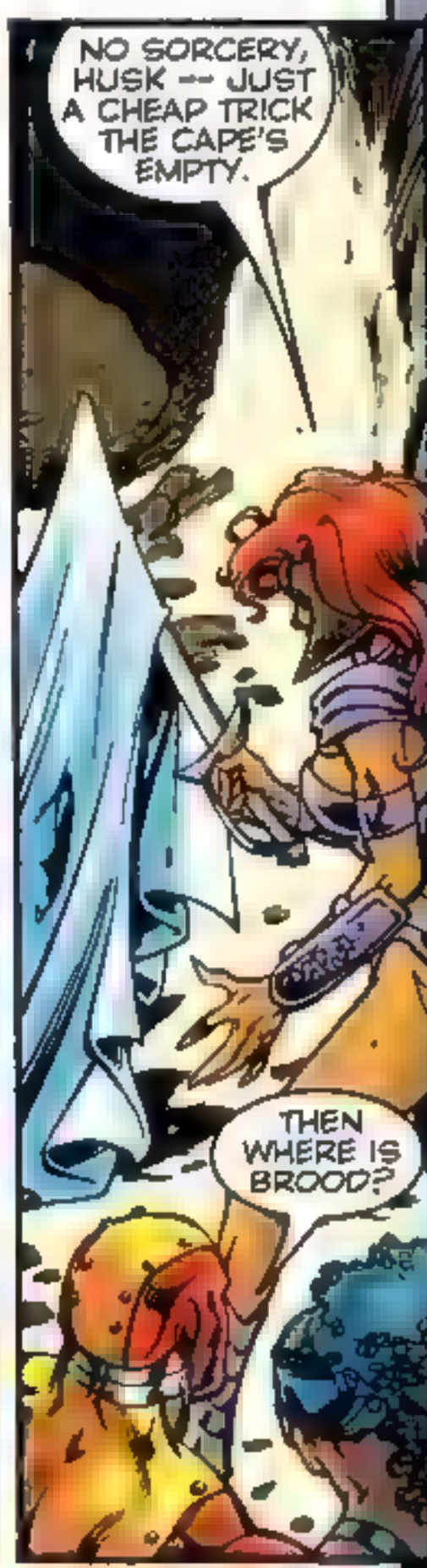
YOU CAN'T TURN --
GYAAAAH!
BUT -- I DIDN'T... *WHAT...?*

YOU MEAN *WHO*.
I FIND A LITTLE FRIENDLY EAR DAMAGE NEVER FAILS TO BRING 'EM DOWN

THE TRAITOR IS DOWN, BUT WHAT OF BROTHER BROOD?
I SPY HIS FOUL VISAGE!

MAY *SHERA* GUIDE MY AIM!

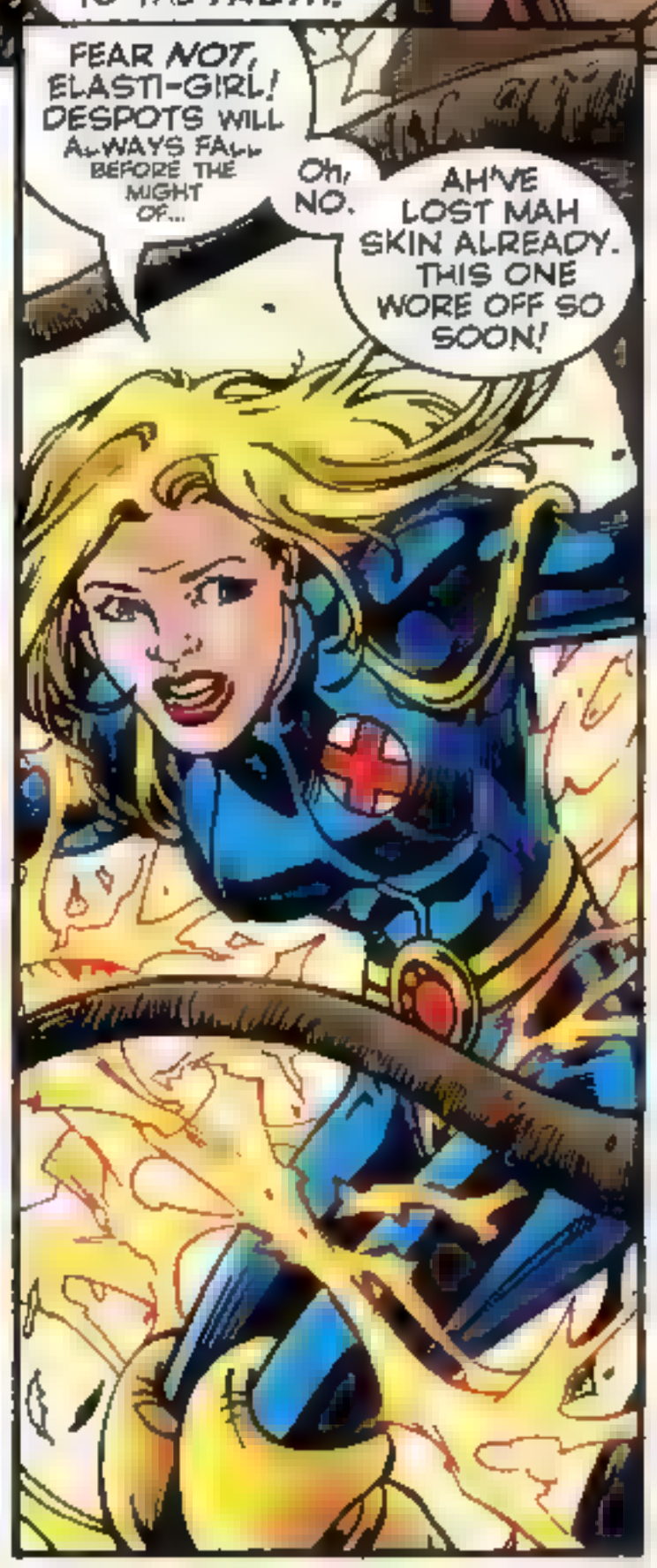

WHAT SORCERY IS THIS? MY SHAFT FINDS NO MARK BUT AIR!

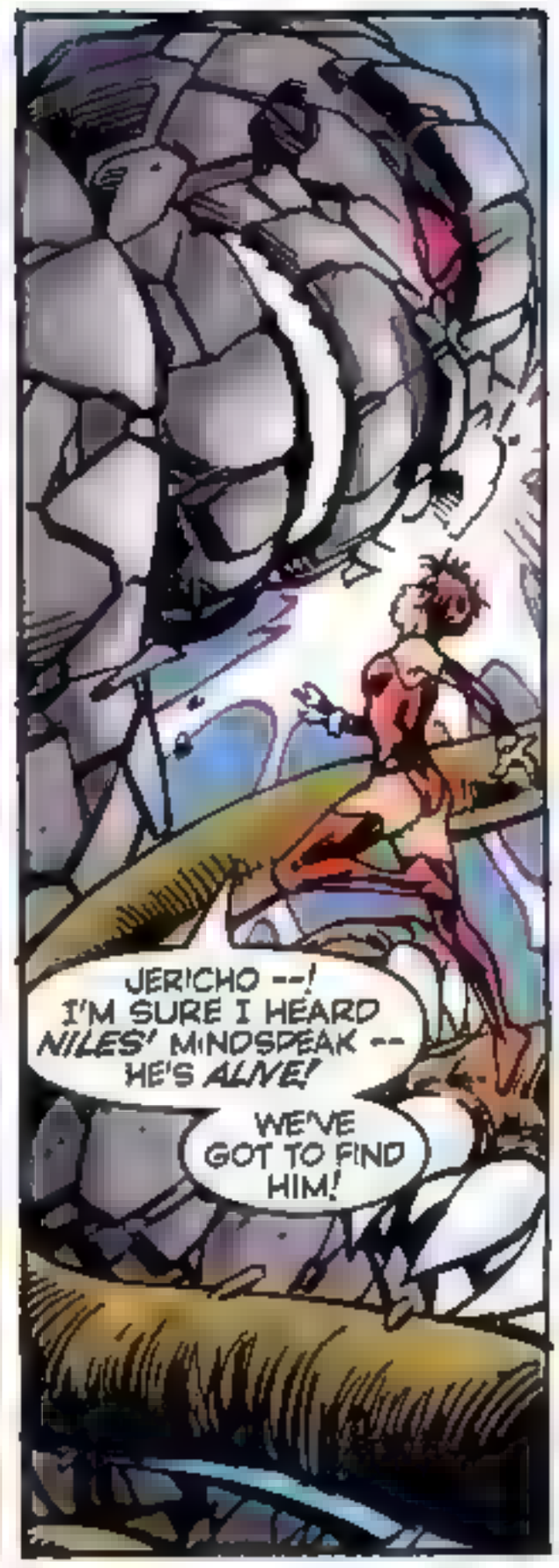

NO SORCERY, HUSK -- JUST A CHEAP TRICK THE CAPE'S EMPTY.
THEN WHERE IS BROOD?

BROOD IS EVERYWHERE! BROOD IS ALL!
HAVING CONVERTED ONE OF YOUR UNBELIEVING NUMBER, I COME TO DELIVER THE SAME GLORIOUS FATE TO EACH OF YOU!
THE GLORY WILL BE IN THE BATTLE JOINED TO KEEP YOU FROM THAT INFERNAL GOAL, DEMON!
YOU UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF THE BROOD. YOU WILL ALL COME ONE BY ONE TO THE TRUTH!

YOU MONSTER!
DON'T TAUNT ME WITH WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO NILES --
-- BRING HIM TO ME OR I'LL CRUSH YOU!

I DOUBT THAT, WOMAN -- EVEN YOUR GIANTESS FORM CANNOT STAND BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE COLLECTIVE BROOD!
GET OFF ME, YOU OVERBRED RATS!


FEAR NOT, ELASTI-GIRL! DESPOTS WILL ALWAYS FALL BEFORE THE MIGHT OF...
Oh, NO.
AH'VE LOST MAH SKIN ALREADY. THIS ONE WORE OFF SO SOON!



WHOMP

I ASSURE YOU, FINDING NILES WON'T BE A PROBLEM.

BUT YOU MAY REGRET YOUR ILL-FATED ATTEMPT AT RESCUE...

... BECAUSE NILES CABLE IS NOW BROOD.

HELP... ME...

BROTHER BROOD MUST BE THE *LIKHO*, THE EVIL ONE, HIMSELF, TO HAVE DEFEATED *NILES!*

HE'S NOT DAID YET, BUT Oh, M'LORD, WHAT CAN WE DO?

WE CAIN'T HARM THE CHIEF!

WE *MUST!*

HUSK, USE YOUR DIAL! WE HAVE TO DEFEAT HIM -- THE *FUTURE* DEPENDS ON IT!

AGAIN THIS TALK OF THE FUTURE -- *WHY?*

Y'DO SEEM *SO* KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT SOMETHIN'... UNKNOWABLE

I *KNOW* THAT IF WE ALLOW BROTHER BROOD TO SUCCEED, HE WILL USE NILES TO SPEARHEAD THE TAKEOVER OF *EARTH* BY THE BROOD

I *KNOW* THAT THE BROOD WILL THEN BE OVERTHROWN BY HUMANS WHO WILL *NEVER* FORGIVE OUR KIND.

AND I *KNOW* THAT WE WILL BE FORCED INTO CAVES AND HUNTED LIKE BEASTS -- ALL BECAUSE OF *THAT* MAN!

WHAT AMAZING PRESCIENCE, STONE ONE!

THE BROOD WILL *CERTAINLY* INHERIT THE EARTH, AND WE *WILL* USE EVERY LIVING MUTANT TO DO SO!

BECAUSE WHEN MUTANT AND BROOD JOIN --

-- BOTH ARE MADE MORE POWERFUL!

SO JOIN WITH US -- OR *DIE!*

SO SPEAKS THE BROOD QUEEN!

SOUNDS LIKE WE DIE EITHER WAY

ME, I OPT TO GO DOWN AS MYSELF, NOT AS SOME MAJOR-LEAGUE *UGLY!*... IF THAT'S AN OPTION...

REALLY *HATE* TO DO THIS, JANET...

BUT WE *BOTH* KNOW THERE'S NO FREEING NILES NOW EXCEPT BY DEATH!

FORGIVE ME, NILES!

I DON'T NEED YOUR FORGIVENESS.

I NEED YOU ALL TO LEAVE, *NOW*, BEFORE --

-- I --

-- TAKE YOU *DOWN*, HUMANS!

WOOOMP

NO! I WON'T LET *YOU* KILL THE DREAM -- THE X-PATROL WILL *NOT* BE DESTROYED THIS WAY!

NO MATTER WHAT THE SACRIFICE, I WON'T LET MY OWN FUTURE COME TO PASS!

WHO *ARE* YOU, STRANGER? YOUR POWER IS AS STRONG AS MINE --

-- BUT HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO EQUAL *ME*?

MY DISGUISE!

I CAN EQUAL YOU BECAUSE I AM YOU!
NOW THAT THE ROCKS OF "JERICHO" HAVE FALLEN, LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF -- I AM NILES DAYSPRING...
NO WONDER I TRUSTED HIM... HE'S A YOUNGER YOU!
... AND I'VE COME TO SAVE THE FUTURE!
YOU ARE INDEED ME...
GOOD. THEN YOU... CAN TAKE MY PLACE.
GO, SOUL-SELF...
NILES!
PER'APS A NEW ME CAN HELP...
... AND HEAL BROTHER BROOD.
SKREEEE
NOOO! BROOD MUST TRIUMPH! BROOD...
UNGH!
NILES! WHAT WAS THAT? IT DESTROYED BROTHER BROOD!
A GIFT...

... PROTECTION FROM THE DEADLY TECHNO-VIRUS LOCKED INSIDE ME.

GOODBYE, JANET.

I LOV 001011011

FIGHT IT, NILES!

I CAN TELEKINETICALLY FORCE THE VIRUS INTO REMISSION, BUT I *CAN'T* REMOVE THE BROOD IMPLANT WITHOUT --

YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN.

NILES CAN SURVIVE THIS.

I'M SURE OF IT...

TRUST, YOU SAID, YET *YOU* WERE THE LIAR!

I'M SORRY FOR THAT, BUT I WASN'T SURE YOU'D BELIEVE --

AS THE OTHERS SPEAK, NILES IS ONLY DIMLY AWARE OF THEIR WORDS...

... AS HE FEELS HER TOUCH AGAIN.

RAVEN... SHALL I *GO...?*

I AM SO *PROUD* OF YOU, MY LOVE.

BUT IT'S NOT YET TIME. JUST REST... AND *HEAL.*

THEN SHE IS GONE, AND HE KNOWS IT IS FOR THE LAST TIME...

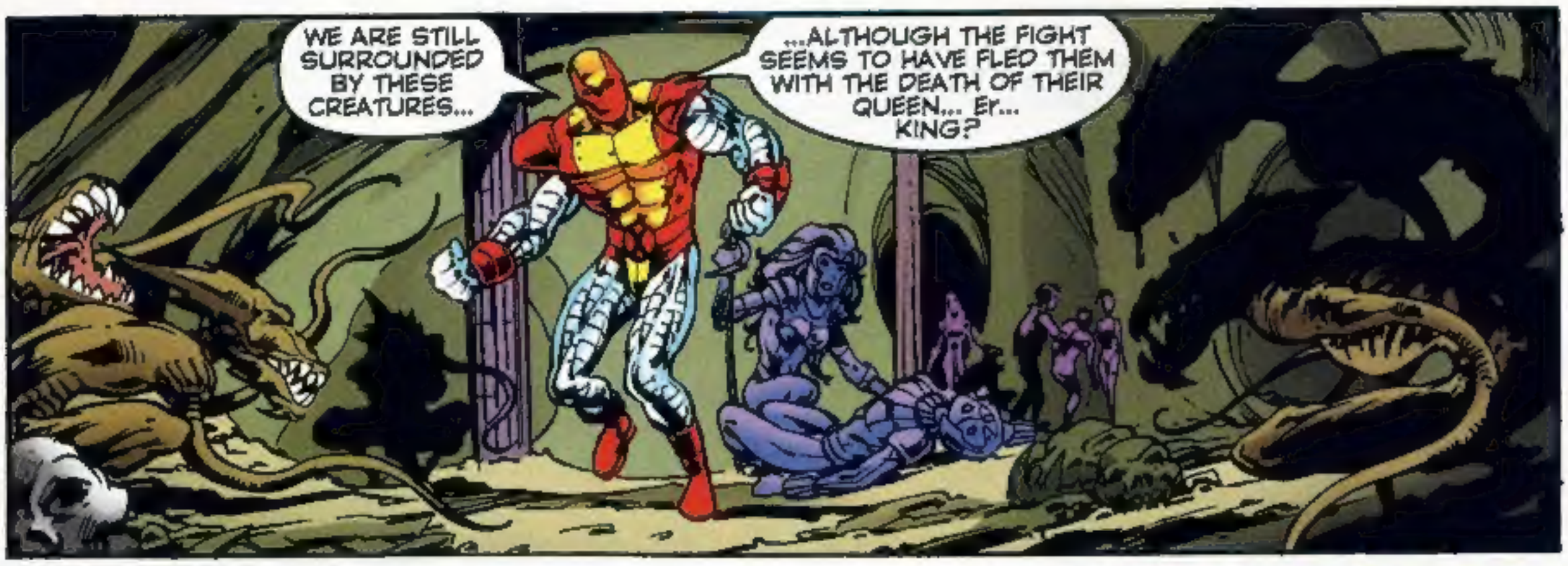
WHAT?

WHY'RE Y'ALL *STARIN'* AT ME? AH DIDN'T EVEN CHANGE THAT TIME!

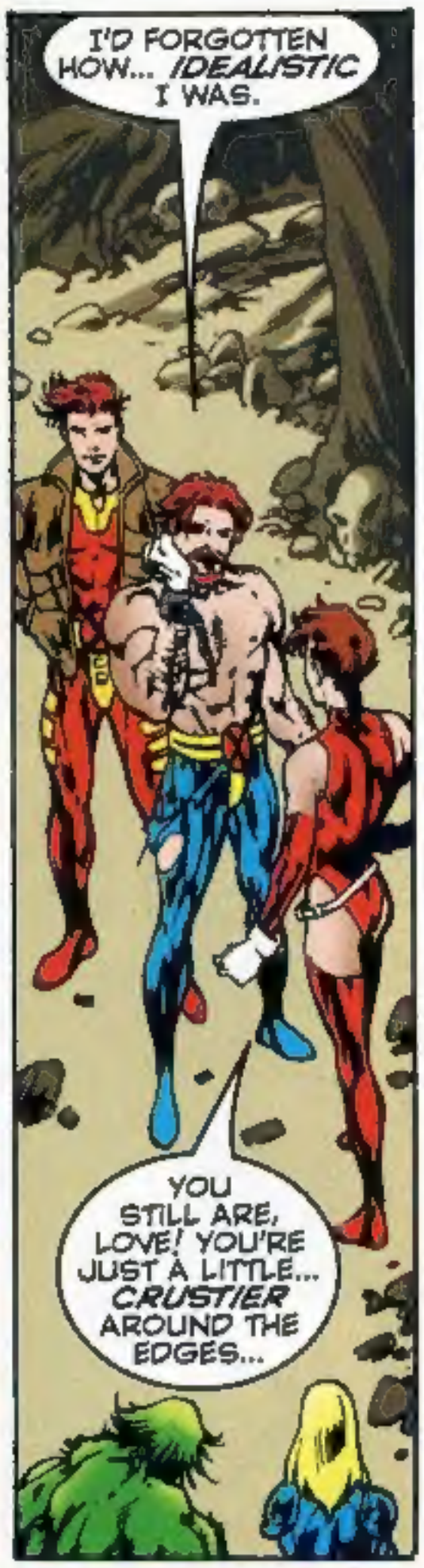
THAT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE...

NILES, I THINK YOU AND I NEED TO HAVE A *TALK* ABOUT THAT WOMAN...

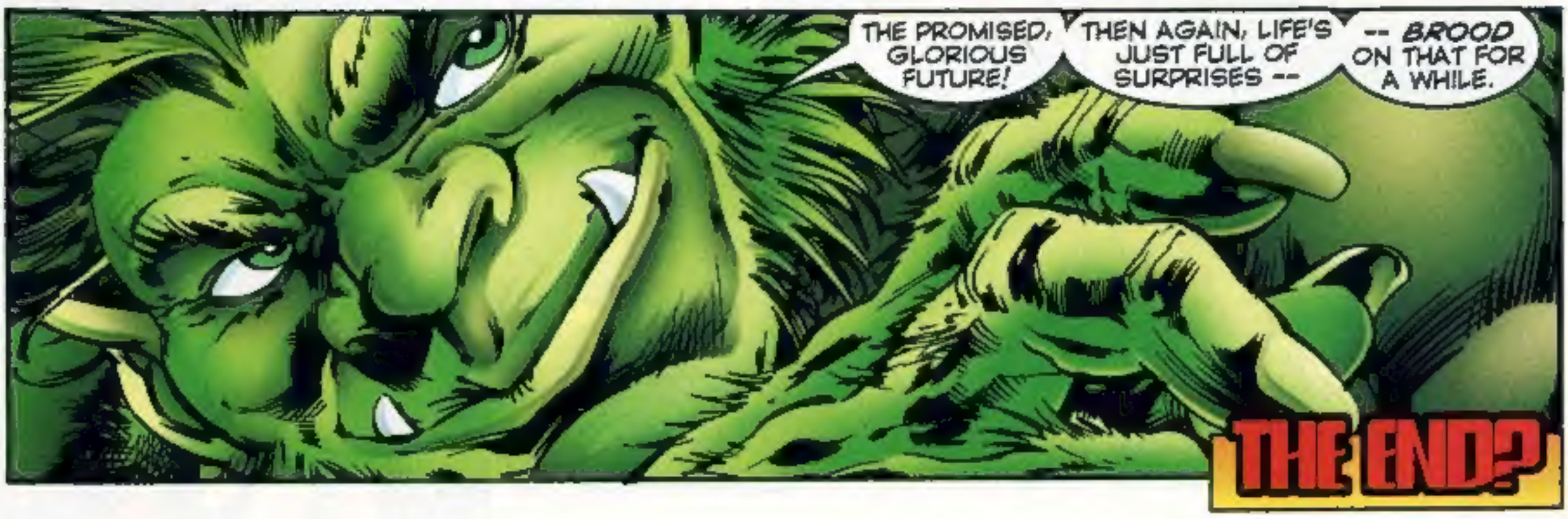
FIRST WE SHOULD PERHAPS *LEAVE* THIS PLACE?


WE ARE STILL SURROUNDED BY THESE CREATURES...
...ALTHOUGH THE FIGHT SEEMS TO HAVE FLED THEM WITH THE DEATH OF THEIR QUEEN... Er... KING?

GOOD! YOU'RE ALL HEALED! NOW YOU CAN LEAD MUTANTKIND INTO A NEW AND BETTER FUTURE SO MINE... YOURS... OURS... WILL NEVER COME TO BE!
GYAHK!
KOF!


I'D FORGOTTEN HOW... IDEALISTIC I WAS.
YOU STILL ARE, LOVE! YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE... CRUSTIER AROUND THE EDGES...

SO LET'S PUT THOSE IDEALS TO WORK! WHILE LIFE STILL SHINES INSIDE US, WE WILL GO ON!
WITH THE HELP OF THIS EXUBERANT YOUNG -- THIS EX-MAN, LET'S GO MAKE A GLORIOUS FUTURE!
WITH THE QUEEN DEAD AND THE NEW QUEEN INSIDE ME DESTROYED, THE CURSE OF BROTHER BROOD IS FINALLY OVER!
TO THE FUTURE, X-PATROL!


THE PROMISED, GLORIOUS FUTURE!
THEN AGAIN, LIFE'S JUST FULL OF SURPRISES --
-- BROOD ON THAT FOR A WHILE.
THE END?

BONUS
AMALGAM PINUP:
BROTHER
BROOD